

ICAO Flight Plan Filing

The FAA is proposing to implement flight plan filing for civil aircraft exclusively under the format used by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO). Flight plans contain specific information relating to the proposed flight of an aircraft and controllers use them to provide air traffic services. Today, pilots file flight plans in the U.S. under either the domestic or ICAO format. The use of one format will simplify the process and align U.S. flight plans within ICAO standards.

Switching from domestic plan format to ICAO format is relatively simple and aided by the fact that most of the fields in the domestic form are found in the international form. While some wording is slightly different, pilots experienced with filing domestic plans will see close similarities with most of the international fields, allowing them to file ICAO plans with ease. The table below illustrates how domestic and ICAO fields are very similar.

Domestic Fields	ICAO Field Equivalents
Aircraft Identification	Aircraft Identification
Type (of Flight)	Flight Rules
Aircraft Type	Type of Aircraft
Special Equipment*	Equipment (COM/NAV)*
Departure Point	Departure Aerodrome**
Departure Time	Time
True Airspeed	Cruising Speed
Cruising Altitude	Level
Route of Flight	Route**
Destination	Destination Aerodrome**
Est Time Enroute	Total EET
Remarks	Other Information/Remarks
Fuel on Board	Endurance
Number Aboard	Persons on Board
Color of Aircraft	Aircraft Color and Markings
Pilot's Name & Other Information	Pilot in Command

* This field is optional ** ICAO IFR Flight Plans require 4 character location identifiers

Once the information needed to file a flight plan is ready, and the pilot has familiarized themselves with ICAO field terminology, then the pilot is ready to file an ICAO Flight Plan. Refer to the ICAO form below which highlights the fields the pilot needs to complete. Note that for IFR flight plans, two additional fields are required.

International Flight Plan

3 MESSAGE TYPE		7 AIRCRAFT IDENTIFICATION		8 FLIGHT RULES		TYPE OF FLIGHT	
<input type="text"/>		<input type="text"/>		<input type="text"/>		<input type="text"/>	
9 NUMBER		TYPE OF AIRCRAFT		WAKE TURBULENCE CAT.		10 EQUIPMENT	
<input type="text"/>		<input type="text"/>		<input type="text"/>		<input type="text"/>	
13 DEPARTURE AERODROME		TIME					
<input type="text"/>		<input type="text"/>					
15 CRUISING SPEED		LEVEL		ROUTE			
<input type="text"/>		<input type="text"/>		<input type="text"/>			
<=							
16 DESTINATION AERODROME		TOTAL EET		ALTN AERODROME		2ND ALTN AERODROME	
<input type="text"/>		<input type="text"/>		<input type="text"/>		<input type="text"/>	
18 OTHER INFORMATION							
<=							
SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION (NOT TO BE TRANSMITTED IN FPL MESSAGES)							
19 ENDURANCE		PERSONS ON BOARD		EMERGENCY RADIO			
HR MIN		<input type="text"/>		UHF VHF ELBA			
<input type="text"/>		<input type="text"/>		<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>			
SURVIVAL EQUIPMENT		JACKETS					
POLAR DESERT MARITIME JUNGLE		LIGHT FLUORES UH VHF					
<input type="text"/> / <input type="text"/>		<input type="text"/> / <input type="text"/>		<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>			
DINGHIES		COLOR					
NUMBER CAPACITY COVER		<input type="text"/>					
<input type="text"/>		<input type="text"/>					
AIRCRAFT COLOR AND MARKINGS							
<input type="text"/>							
REMARKS							
<input type="text"/>							
PILOT-IN-COMMAND							
<input type="text"/>							

	= field required for IFR and VFR
	= field required for IFR
Non-highlighted field	= field not required for Domestic ICAO

Simplified Guidance for Completing a Domestic ICAO Flight Plan

Please refer to the Table of Contents below for instructions on how to complete the required fields of the ICAO flight plan.

For additional guidance, refer to the Aeronautical Information Manual (AIM) Section 5-1-9, available at this [link](#).

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ITEM 7: Aircraft Identification (maximum 7 characters)

ENTER aircraft identifications, not exceeding 7 alphanumeric characters and without hyphens or symbols:

ITEM 8: Flight Rules and Type of Flight (1 or 2 characters)

Flight Rules

ENTER one of the following letters to denote the category of flight rules with which the pilot intends to comply:

- I if it is intended that the entire flight will be operated under IFR.
- V if it is intended that the entire flight will be operated under VFR.
- Y if the flight initially will be operated under IFR, followed by one or more changes of flight rules.
- Z if the flight initially will be operated under VFR, followed by one or more changes of flight rules.

NOTE. Domestic automation systems cannot accept a flight plan that begins under VFR and subsequently changes to one or more flight rules (that is, “Z”). For this purpose, file separate flight plans for the portions of the route that the pilot intends to conduct under IFR.

Type of flight

ENTER one of the following letters to denote the type of flight when required by the appropriate ATS authority:

- S if scheduled air service
- N if non-scheduled air transport operation
- G if general aviation
- M if military
- X if other than any of the defined categories above

ITEM 9: Number and Type of Aircraft and Wake Turbulence Category

Type of aircraft (2 to 4 characters)

ENTER the appropriate designator as specified in ICAO Doc 8643, Aircraft Type Designators, OR if no such designator has been assigned, or in case of formation flights comprising more than one type, ENTER ZZZZ, and SPECIFY in Item 18, the (numbers and) type(s) of aircraft preceded by TYP/.

Wake turbulence category (1 character)

ENTER an oblique stroke (/) followed by one of the following letters to indicate the wake turbulence category of the aircraft:

- H - HEAVY, to indicate an aircraft type with a maximum certificated take-off mass of 136 000 kg or more;
- M - MEDIUM, to indicate an aircraft type with a maximum certificated take-off mass of less than 136,000 kg but more than 7,000 kg;
- L - LIGHT, to indicate an aircraft type with a maximum certificated take-off mass of 7,000 kg or less.

ITEM 10: Equipment and Capabilities

Capabilities comprise the following elements:

- (a) Presence of relevant serviceable equipment on board the aircraft;
- (b) Equipment and capabilities commensurate with flight crew qualifications; and
- (c) Where applicable, authorization from the appropriate authority.

Radio communication, navigation and approach aid equipment and capabilities

ENTER one letter as follows:

N if no COM/NAV/approach aid equipment for the route to be flown is carried, or the equipment is

unserviceable,

OR

S if standard COM/NAV/approach aid equipment for the route to be flown is carried and serviceable,

AND/OR

ENTER one or more of the following letters options to indicate the serviceable COM/NAV/ approach aid equipment and capabilities available:

- D (DME)
- G (GNSS)
- I (INS)
- O (VOR)
- R (PBN)
- T (TACAN)
- W (RVSM)
- Z (Other Cap.)

Surveillance equipment and capabilities

ENTER N if no surveillance equipment for the route to be flown is carried, or the equipment is unserviceable,
OR

ENTER one or more of the following descriptors, up to a maximum of 20 characters, to describe the serviceable surveillance equipment and/or capabilities on board. Enter no more than one transponder code (Modes A, C, or S)

- A (Transponder, no Mode C)
- C (Transponder, Mode C)
- B1 (ADS-B, 1090ES, Out)
- B2 (ADS-B, 1090ES, Out/In)
- U1 (ADS-B, UAT, Out)
- U1 (ADS-B, UAT, Out/In)

ITEM 13: Departure Aerodrome and Time (8 characters)

ENTER the ICAO four-letter location indicator of the departure aerodrome as specified in Doc 7910, Location Indicators,

OR if no location indicator has been assigned,

ENTER ZZZZ and SPECIFY, in Item 18, the name and location of the aerodrome preceded by DEP/,

OR the first point of the route or the marker radio beacon preceded by DEP/..., if the aircraft has not taken off from the aerodrome,

ENTER for a flight plan the actual or estimated time over the first point of the route to which the flight plan applies

ITEM 15: Route

ENTER the first cruising speed as in (a) and the first cruising level as in (b), without a space between them.

THEN following the arrow, *ENTER* the route description as in (c).

(a) Cruising speed (maximum 5 characters)

ENTER the *True Air Speed* for the first or the whole cruising portion of the flight, in terms of:

Kilometers per hour, expressed as K followed by 4 figures (for example, K0830), *or*

Knots, expressed as N followed by 4 figures (for example, N0485), *or*

True Mach number, when so prescribed by the appropriate ATS authority, to the nearest hundredth of unit Mach, expressed as M followed by 3 figures (for example, M082).

(b) Cruising level (maximum 5 characters)

ENTER the planned cruising level for the first or the whole portion of the route to be flown, in terms of: *Flight level*, expressed as F followed by 3 figures (for example, F085; F330)

(c) Route (including changes of speed, level and/or flight rules)

Flights along designated ATS routes

ENTER if the departure aerodrome is located on or connected to the ATS route, the designator of the first ATS route,

OR if the departure aerodrome is not located on or connected to the ATS route, the letters DCT followed by the point of joining the first ATS route, followed by the designator of the ATS route.

THEN

ENTER each point at which either a change of speed and/or level is planned to start, or a change of ATS route, and/or a change of flight rules is planned,

ITEM 16: Destination Aerodrome and Total Estimated Elapsed Time, Destination Alternate Aerodrome(s)

Destination aerodrome and total estimated elapsed time (8 characters)

ENTER the ICAO four-letter location indicator of the destination aerodrome as specified in Doc 7910, Location Indicators,

OR if no location indicator has been assigned,

ENTER ZZZZ followed, without a space, by the total estimated elapsed time, and *SPECIFY* in Item 18 the name and location of the aerodrome, preceded by DEST/.

THEN, WITHOUT A SPACE,

ENTER the total estimated elapsed time.

ITEM 19: Supplementary Information

Endurance

After E/ *ENTER* a 4-figure group giving the fuel endurance in hours and minutes.

Persons on board

After P/ *ENTER* the total number of persons (passengers and crew) on board, when required by the appropriate ATS authority. *ENTER* TBN (to be notified) if the total number of persons is not known at the time of filing.

A/ (AIRCRAFT COLOR AND MARKINGS)

ENTER color of aircraft and significant markings.

C/ (PILOT) *ENTER* name of pilot-in-command.

For additional information about ICAO flight plans, please visit FAA's Flight Planning Information website [here](#). Information on the website includes:

- An ICAO Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) section on how to file a flight plan
- How to prepare an ICAO flight plan form
- How to file an ICAO flight plan